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AUTHOR Judge, Harry G.
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ABSTRACT

This paper addresses the following issues and problems facing teacher education in England and Wales: (1) the implications for teacher education of the government decision to change from a dual (elitist) system of education (which was mirrored in a dual system of teacher education) to a system of equal education for all children; (2) the effects of the massive expansion of the teacher education enterprise between the years 1960 and 1970, followed by a rapid demographic collapse and the sudden reversal of demand for teachers and decline in enrollment in teacher education; (3) a cut in the number of sites in which teacher education is conducted and a change in the balance among those sites and institutions, with the balance shifting dramatically towards universities from public sector institutions of higher education; (4) the establishment of the Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education by the government, and the impact of government control on teacher education institutions; (5) the gradual progress of anti-intellectualism in teacher education; and (6) the need for re-structuring teacher salaries. (JD)

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Dr. Harry G. Judge

Director, Department of Educational Studies

University of Oxford

"Teacher Education in England and Wales"

Presentation made at the Minneapolis Hearing of the

National Commission for Excellence in Teacher Education

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I do regret that over the last ten years, for reasons which I think it's possible to analyze and understand, that the mutual interest in different educational systems on both sides of the Atlantic appears to have diminished. I'm not one of those naive and old-fashioned people who believes that the experience, or indeed the sufferings of one great nation can be automatically transferred to another, but I do believe that the disappearance, certainly for Britain--I speak only for Britain, indeed only for England and Wales as you will discover--that the disappearance of the comparative perspective has impoverished a great deal of our discussions over there. So I lament that and rejoice in the fact that you're prepared to listen to me for a few minutes this afternoon.

I shall, partly because of problems of time, but also for a more substantial reason, concentrate on a case study which will be very largely confined to the United Kingdom, and indeed to England and Wales, because both Scotland and Northern Ireland have structurally different systems, and therefore different problems. I hope by doing that to make clear by implication some of the problems (I have no notion about the solutions), some of the problems which I believe the teacher education enterprise now faces, both in this country and in my own.

The contrasts are of course more obvious than the comparisons. I remember one of many long and fascinating discussions with Jerry Bruno during his all too brief Oxford incarnation in which he compared Britain with the United States--the advantages and disadvantages of working in both societies--by arguing, and I know he was right, that Britain was a village. Not only in terms of its smallness but also in terms of the intimacy of the relationships between government and academe and professional associations of teachers and politicians and all the rest of it. In spite of grand rhetoric, which goes back to habeas corpus if not to Magna Charta, about the political system of Britain being highly decentralized, it is in fact, in most of the things which matter, highly centralized; although not, I would like to

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think, totalitarian. In other words, it is relatively easy if you are dealing with British problems to know what the answers are, or at least to tell other people what the answers are, and to indicate which of the levers needs to be pulled in order to remove problems; or more accurately, in order to replace some problems by other problems. You can see how the system works, and where the levers and pulleys are. Certainly for an admiring foreign visitor it is very much more--very much more difficult to understand such things in your country.

So, we have a centralized system. The advantage of which I want to argue is that you can treat it, if you are so minded, as a laboratory, in which you can study what happens as a result of certain policy changes, because the policy changes can be put into effect, as they were indeed by Margaret Thatcher when she was Secretary for Education in the early 1970's, and can be seen to have fairly immediate impact. I will not presume to contrast that neat, cozy, village-like, centralized, comprehensible system with the vast, cosmic, non-system full of contradictions and confusions and contrasts and pluralisms in which you live. My argument would quite simply be that by looking at the smaller system, you can occasionally see some issues and some problems in sharper perspective. That, then, is my excuse for concentrating on the United Kingdom. If I need another one, it is that I know a certain amount about it, certainly more than I do about your system, and it will therefore be safer for me to talk about England and Wales rather than about the United States of America.

I want to begin by concentrating on two aspects of the educational reforms of the 1960's, which are, I think, of profound significance to understanding what is happening in teacher education in the United Kingdom now. Because each is, I believe, significant. The second is obvious. The first is, I think, less obvious, and so I will take a moment to dwell upon it because I think it marks off the British experience from that of most European countries, with the significant exception of Sweden. Because what happened in the 1960's is that, slowly and hesitantly following their rebellious brothers and sisters on this side of the Atlantic, British society made a serious attempt to produce a system of elementary and secondary education that would in fact, educate to the highest possible standards, the whole of the population and not part of it. And this is very significant, I would argue, for changes in attitudes towards, and the performance of teacher education.

It would be an oversimplification, (but pardonable, I hope, on the present occasion where compression is of the essence). It would be a pardonable exaggeration to say that until the mid-1960's, there existed in Britain, as there still exists in the great party of Europe, a dual system of education, and quite neatly matching that, a dual system of teacher education. The dual system of education was quite simply one which educated all children up to the age of 11, and then for the 25% that were deemed to be more able, provided a high quality academic education in our selected grammar schools--and provided as little as possible for the rest. And matching that dual and devisive system of secondary education, there was a dual system of teacher education and training in which the teachers of the more able pupils--school

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students--were taught in universities and then trained in universities, and the teachers of the rest were trained elsewhere. And there was about that a kind of neatness, and the agonies of teacher education in Britain since the 1960's, which have not been matched in my view in either France or West Germany, really were produced by a serious, if incomplete attempt, to educate the whole of the population.

And that immediately raises the question to which no answer has yet been discovered: what is the best way of producing teachers for all, rather than teachers for some? The following observer may be permitted perhaps to comment on his surprise that in so many of the criticisms which are uttered even in Newsweek and elsewhere of the performance and standards of American teachers, little attention is paid, less than is, I believe, elsewhere, to the enormous difficulty of the task of preparing a teaching force that will educate all and not some. So that classical, uniparan(??), academic versus the rest mold, both of secondary education and of training, was broken in Britain in the 1960's, and we still live with the consequences of it.

That's the qualitative change. The quantitative change is one with which, by analogy, you will be very much more familiar. That is of course, the massive expansion of the teacher education enterprise between the years 1960 and 1970, which was made necessary by a benign attempt and a successful attempt to improve the pupil/teacher ratio, so that we now have one teacher to eighteen pupils throughout the system--elementary and secondary--in the United Kingdom. An attempt (successful again) to raise the school leaving age, and an attempt (successful again) to lengthen the amount of time that it took to produce a teacher. And as a result of that, by the standards of the village (and I shall not forget I come from the village, nor will I allow you to), the expansion in the scale of the teacher education enterprise between 1960 and 1970, was of the order of from the capacity of 60,000, to a capacity of 130,000 plus. The system was more than doubled within ten years and that remarkable achievement was probably the greatest success of Anthony Crossland, probably the most distinguished of our Secretaries for Education since the Second World War.

So there was a change, both of a qualitative kind and of a quantitative kind. And by the 1970's, by the early 1970's, those had bitten deep into the system. And by that time too, the strains upon the system had indeed become all too painfully obvious. If you double the capacity of a system, it is extremely difficult to maintain the quality of it, even if it had been satisfactory to begin with. If you double the number of teachers that the system needs, it is extremely difficult to maintain the standards of admission to teacher education courses even if they had been satisfactory to begin with. And as far as the teacher trainers themselves are concerned, if you are doubling the number of people engaged in that kind of faculty activity, it is hard to maintain the standards from which you began. And there is no doubt that by the early 1970's the volume of criticism of the way in which British teachers were trained (their inability to cope with the diverse demands made upon them, their poor academic quality, and all the rest), were part of the commonly received wisdom. And it is for

that reason that Mrs. Thatcher, who even her enemies would agree, is one of the most energetic of the Secretaries for Education since the Second World War, decided to establish a committee of inquiry--small--under the chairmanship of Lord James of Rusholme (then vice chancellor of the University of York), to work full-time for one year, which was enormous fun and perhaps almost justifies the description that I joined her staff to work full-time for a year on these problems. And at the heart of the problem, as perceived in 1971 when that committee was established, was the remoteness of teacher education from the needs of the field. And as a secondary comprehensive school principal at that particular time, I had views that were probably as extreme and unreasonable as those of most of my colleagues. The teacher educators were essentially ivory tower philosophizers, who would not survive a day in the trenches, and indeed were just too intelligent to get into the trenches in any case, so did the problem of survival wouldn't arrive. And that was a very, very--I exaggerate and simplify--but that was the prevailing mood at that time: that teacher education had become academic. It had become theoretical, and academically and theoretically second-rate, just to make things worse. And the James Committee made a number of abrupt and not altogether welcome proposals for remedying that state of affairs. I shan't go into those proposals now; I don't think they're immediately relevant.

What was relevant and what is relevant, I suggest, both to the United Kingdom and the United States now, is the collapse, the demographic collapse of the 1970's, which meant that a system which had been rapidly expanding, suddenly (and to the astonishment it has to be said of most observers at the time, who they should have been able to count, but weren't), suddenly the system went into reverse, and there was a most rapid decline. [This is] much more important than any arguments about (in terms of theory), conceptually, what teacher education should be about, because by the end of the 1970's, the teacher education system, which you may recall had a capacity of 130,000 at the end of the period of expansion; by 1982, that had dropped back to 43,000. So, that the graph there, which is a fairly dramatic one, is strong 60,000 in 1960, to 130,000 in 1970, to 43,000 just after 1980. (A concertina with a vengeance.)

Now it is that point I think that one might argue--I'm not sure that I would--but one might argue the advantages of some arrangements, however imperfect, for central planning and direction, because a change of that scale in a small society is simply not one that could sensibly be left to individual agreement, rules of the market, the survival of the fittest and all the rest of it. And what happened with very little public discussion, and as far as I'm aware, no debate in the House of Commons, and only one in the House of Lords (where they're not so busy that they can't think about education from time to time). What happened across the 1970's was a massive cut in the number of institutions concerned with teacher education, and a change in institutional balance, putting it crudely, very much less outside the great universities, and very much more inside the great universities, and a changing content of teacher education. Those three things: a dramatic cut in the number of sites on which teacher education is

conducted, a change in the balance among those particular sites and institutions, shifting dramatically towards the universities and away from what we would call the public sector institutions of higher education, and perhaps most important of all in the long run, a fundamental change in what is perceived as the appropriate content of teacher education. Let me deal with each of those three changes in turn, and then finally raise a few trans-Atlantic queries and questions about them, which I would certainly appreciate any comments and help that you can give me.

The reduction in scale--the reduction in the number of sites to begin with. In 1970, in England and Wales, teacher education was conducted on 207 sites, in 207 institutions. The categories are not all that important, if you think of the universities as providing higher education and you remember our age participation rates in post-secondary education are lamented very low in Britain. And if you think of the universities as providing for about 7% of the age group, then the other insitutions of higher education provide for another 6%, so that the total is 13%, rounded up or down as the case may be, in case of any statisticians in the congregation this morning. So that distinction is an important one, but it's still within, what you I'm sure would characterize as, a very elitist system. Two hundred and seven places then, "did" teacher education in 1970. When I left Britain a few weeks ago, that number was down to 84, and I would be surprised to discover if it's still 84 when I get back, and astonished if it were in fact 85. Now that is in itself an interesting contrast: a reduction in the number of sites from 207 to 84, associated with a reduction in the demand for teachers. And as I understand it, and for reasons which are not mysterious, that has not been the experience in the United States, and that indeed a rapid and dramatic decline in the number of enrollments on teacher education forces has been accompanied by a slight increase in the number of sites on which the enterprise is conducted. That was achieved in Britain with a measure of brutality and a certian amount of blood, tear, and sweat, because it was achieved through various devices but (like cutting off the money in effect--which is always effective), it was achieved by the power of central government. So that's the first big change.

The second big change is in the balance, i.e., how much of that teacher education goes on in what would vulgarly and therefore correctly be regarded as high quality, internationally prestigious institutions, and how much goes on elsewhere in places closer to the real world. Well in 1970, the total number of English and Welsh universities in the business of teacher education was 27, and in 1982, when the overall number, you'll remember, had gone down from 207 to 84, the total number of universities engaged in the business was 27. In other words, not one university program has been affected yet, though we did have some anxious moments, and the whole of the reduction has fallen in the more heterogeneous, non-university sector. Or to put it another way, universities monopolized 13% of the teacher education sites in 1970, and they now monopolize 32%. So there is a change then in the overall number of places, and there is a change in the relative importance within that overall number of the university sector.

And the third change about which I wish to say something and then ask my few questions, is in the content and format of teacher education, because those changes have been accompanied by equally important qualitative changes which I will very rapidly summarize.

First of these changes, and I hope it's a convenient form of shorthand, though I know shorthand is deceptive, especially when moved from one country to another, has been the shift from concurrent forms of teacher education to consecutive forms of teacher education; or to put it another way, a very, very marked and controversial shift out of the undergraduate business and towards the all-graduate model of teacher education. That is accompanied, as I believe that it may be elsewhere, by a stress on the doctrine, that on the whole it isn't a bad thing if a teacher knows something to teach before she or he begins to teach; therefore the prevailing British model now is a Bachelor's degree in whatever subject or subjects as may be--whether natural sciences or mathematics or modern languages--with nothing to do with education until the Bachelor's degree is achieved and then a one-year course of professional education and training in the business of teaching. There are all sorts of reasons why that has happened, but as six years ago only 22% of our entering teachers entering the teaching force came through that route, the figure is now 54% and increasing. It is an area in which the market is operating, as I understand, and it is in perfectly the mind and psychology of the 18-year-old British school "leaver." She or he sees no reason for pursuing a course from the age of 18 which is locked into the business of teaching when there is open to her or him the free choice, and it has to be demanded as public expense of first of all taking a Bachelor's degree which would give a great deal of flexibility in terms of career, then when the world is clearer and the experiences of high school perhaps a little more remote, making a decision as to whether or not to teach. So it is essentially a market change, but it must be said, and as far as I'm concerned, respectfully encouraged by governments (both of the left and of the right), who took the view that without making too much public fuss about it, the more teacher education could be concentrated in high status institutions, the better for the health of public schooling. So that's one very important shift from the concurrent pattern where education and liberal arts or sciences are pursued together to the consecutive pattern.

The second one, and here I must say I hope that we shall be able to learn a great deal from you, has been the arrival of new doctrines of accreditation. We now have not yet an NCATE, though I don't see why it shouldn't be, but we do have a CATE, which is the Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, which has been constituted by Margaret Thatcher's guru, Sir Keith Joseph, the Secretary of State for Education and Science, who has established this national government body with responsibility and funding by the government, but considerable autonomy from it, in order to establish where courses of teacher education should(shall) be approved and where they should(shall) not. So far, we have lived in what you might call either the ludicrous or the blissful situation in which certainly any university would wish to establish a course of teacher preparation, could do so, and has done so, and because universities are allegedly

autonomous, there has been no kind of inspection or control or accountabiltiy or statement of what they should do; and we have enjoyed a blissful freedom, and of course have made most wise and prudent use of that freedom as I'm sure you'll appreciate. But not any longer--we are now to have a Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education which has stated criteria to which it must work, i.e., criteria to which it must pay attention in determining whether or not a course of teacher preparation should be approved. And that is the remarkable work of the paradoxical and ingenious and brilliant, Sir Keith Joseph. The fellow who is also of the College of Oxford (and some of you might know what that means), who is dedicated of course, to the proposition (deep-dyed benefice that he is), the government should interfere as little as possible in the conduct of public affairs. (Ah, but equally dedicated to the practice that when he is doing the interfering, it doesn't in fact count.) And so quite seriously, we have the spectacle--and that I promise you is an entirely apolitical remark--of a Secretary of State representing a government which wishes that a less government in fact intervening more directly in the business of education than ever before. Some of you, perhaps, who have not been to the United Kingdom recently would be astonished now to discover the amount of intervention and management and control that there is, for example, in the content of the curriculum in both primary and secondary schools. These, for the first time in Britain, are regarded as matters of public responsibility and a formal separation of education and politics, which was historically almost as important for us as the non-establishment of religion was for you, is, in fact, being challenged. I shall not pursue that analogy. So we now have the accreditation alongside the shift--the consecutive pattern.

And the third characteristic, which comes out very clearly in the criteria and goes back to some of the things I was saying about the late 1960's, is a new emphasis upon what I want to call professionalism and clinical experience. Because the Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education does have a list of published criteria to which it must pay attention, and among those criteria are that: no course or program shall be approved unless it is demonstrated that the majority of those faculty concerned in teacher education programs have had recent experience in teaching in the schools for which they will be preparing students; and that the institution has made arrangements for joint appointments and for the involvement of practicing teachers and members of the teacher's associations in the selection of students for such courses and for the making of joint appointments between--I may make that transposition--school boards and universities. And all of these are very sharp and demanding criteria, pushing teacher education for good or ill--and I have a question to raise about that before I sit down--pushing teacher education further towards the clinical experience, the professional engagement, the concern with practice of schools, and farther away from the pursuit of educational theory or the practice of educational research.

Well, those then are the principle changes which are in my mind whenever I leave the village. Very significant changes over the last ten years, and I want, if I may, finally to raise a few very simple questions about them, in the hope that the questions--because there are

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no answers--may in some ways mesh with your own experiences.

First, there is what I would call the problem of the concentration on initial preparation. And here I do think the James Committee of the James Report was right. Because what that report said (and we haven't got it yet), is that the most important bit of teacher education takes place after a teacher has been teaching for five years or more. And that the emphasis in teacher education should therefore be post-experience and inservice, and not pre-experience. The reasons for that are of course in part theoretical, and in part demographic. Two-thirds of our teachers in Britain are now below the age of 35. Therefore, whatever we do, whatever we do in terms of initial teacher training, we shall not change the nature of teaching in our elementary or our secondary schools by addressing in the exclusive sense, the preparation of preservice teachers. It doesn't mean to say it's not worth doing--it is--but it can't do all that much. And Sir Keith Joseph again (you will think of me as his acolyte if I go on in this way, and so I shall have to say a few things on the other side later), Sir Keith Joseph again has--is now insisting--as a condition of government grant (central government grant), to in effect to the school boards, that they shall spend at least 5% of their salary bill every year on releasing teachers full-time for sabbaticals and ??? to universities to pursue their professional education and so on. So, that shift is coming. That is quite a significant one; it means we already have this happily in Oxfordshire that for every 95 elementary and secondary school teachers in the classroom, there are five spending a year full-time at a college of education or a university. That is, I think, an important shift, not yet, perhaps, significant enough.

Secondly, there is what I label as--for us, perhaps for you, I do not know--the problem of accreditation. In what circumstances and to what extent is it helpful to the health and vigor of teacher education to be subjected to a whole paraphanalia of outside control and management and hour counting and all the rest of it. We are very nervous about that. Perhaps we should not be, and in part, of course, our nervousness comes from the fact that the government (namely the Department of Education and Science), is itself to be the arbiter, ultimately, of what those terms and conditions are. There is then that problem.

The third problem I would like simply to mention, again label, is that of intellectualism. I don't think I'm performing; I hope I'm not [doing] a u-turn, which is an extremely dangerous thing to do, but I do feel some anxiety at what I now see as a tendency in the village to de-intellectualize teacher education and training. If things needed to be corrected, and they did, in the late 1960's, it seems to me now possible that the pendulum is swinging too far the other way and the teaching profession itself in Britain is becoming a little nervous that its own rhetoric is being taken too seriously, and feeling that if we are not careful, we shall get so close to the apprenticeship model that the distinction between a tradesman and a professional will in fact disappear. So I see anti-intellectualism, the fact that not once in the criteria for teacher education forces--there is a great deal about pastoral care, relations with the community, discipline, relations with

parents, staffing directions, understanding the administration, mastery of subject matter, control of method--not once in the stated criteria, does the word philosophy or history or sociology or even psychology occur. Even from my somewhat farmyard tastes, that might be going a little far. So I think we do have a problem there.

On the last problem, which I sense is a major international problem, is that even this afternoon, and I might not have done, but I chose to, I have spoken all along as though a teacher is a teacher is a teacher--that this is a single package kind of professional that we can define once and for all. And what as we are coming to suspect--and we have some very serious arguments across the Atlantic about the re-structuring of teachers pay--what in fact we need is a much more sophisticated definition of tasks and roles within the pedagogical process--a much greater variation in salary scales, a much more subtle definition of what it is in fact that a teacher is being prepared life-long to do.

Thank you very much.

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